

THE ALLIANCE HERALD

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

After serving more than eight years as editor in chief of The Alliance Herald, I feel a sense of relief in stepping down from that position, but am glad to retain my connection with the paper in the capacity of associate editor.

At times my work on The Herald has been strenuous, but within the last few years I have written only a small part of what has appeared in the paper, except in the special stockmen's editions. In common with people in general, I have made mistakes; I regret them; but I have had a constant desire to serve humanity by doing right at all times.

In progressive movements I have been in the vanguard sufficiently to help to bear the brunt of the battles against reform; but even at that it has not been all grief.

Twenty-six years before the liquor traffic was outlawed in Nebraska, I entered the campaign for constitutional prohibition, as a newspaper editor and member of the state dry organization. To know what sacrifices I made and things endured for the cause during a little more than a quarter of a century would probably surprise many of my present acquaintances. I now feel well repaid for all by the results that I have had a part in obtaining.

After entering the newspaper business in Alliance, I opened a campaign for the adoption of direct legislation, the initiative and referendum, as old readers of The Herald well know. At that time the opposition to the measure was so strong as to make my position a handicap to me in business; but I stayed by it until I had the satisfaction of seeing Alliance give a rousing majority for it and helping in its adoption as a part of the state constitution.

When I began the advocacy of making intelligence and character, rather than sex, the test of one's right to vote at public elections, women's suffrage was sneered at and many men who at heart favored it feared to declare themselves because of the opposition; but when this question was last voted upon, I had the satisfaction of seeing Alliance give it a handsome majority. I have had the further satisfaction of seeing the state legislature at its last session give to women the right of suffrage so far as it could be extended to them by statutory enactment—and the representative from Alliance took a leading part in securing that legislation.

Henceforth, as associate editor of The Herald, I can give only spare moments to writing matter for publication, but will be in position, I think, to furnish its readers with the cream of state news that will be of particular interest, and furnish stockmen with information that will be both interesting and valuable to them.

And dear, old Alliance. There isn't another town on earth that I love as well. If duty did not call me elsewhere, I would rather live in Alliance than anywhere else on earth. Altho I have accepted a position at the state capital, I still call Alliance my home and shall continue to do so.

This is not an adieu, simply an announcement of a change; but I feel like making use of the opportunity to thank the many readers of the paper who have helped and encouraged me by kind words and co-operation. One and all, they have my earnest wish for their health, prosperity and happiness. JOHN W. THOMAS.

KEEPING UP TO DATE

The baby son of a very rich and highly educated man and a refined and gentle woman was kidnapped by a band of Mexican outlaws. For years the child was held in captivity without knowing anything of his mother or father.

The people among whom he was raised had no education. They knew nothing of modern ways of living. They were rough and uncouth. They dug in the dirt with sticks to cultivate the ground. They knew nothing of trains or street cars or telephones or automobiles or farm tractors or planters or harvesting machinery.

And the boy was like them at twenty-seven years of age. Civilization had passed him by after he was taken from his home in the midst of learning and culture, to the home of these ignorant savages, away from enlightened modern conditions.

Of course he had inherited from generation after generation of civilized ancestors a better brain than the brains of his ignorant captors and when he was discovered and returned to his people, he made rapid progress; but he made progress only by keeping in constant touch with the civilized people of his time.

There is a lesson in this poor boy's experience for each one of us. We can't fail to keep in touch with improvements and still get the benefit of improved conditions.

If any farm family will shut themselves up and shut the rest of the world out, they will not keep up with civilization. We can all learn things from our neighbors. We can read of the experiments that have been made in the past and the conclusions that have been reached. We can keep in touch with experts in every line thru the advertising pages of this paper and other good papers.

If we are to be as successful as our fathers, we must have the benefit of all our fathers knew and of all that has been learned since. We must be as well equipped to meet present conditions as they were equipped to meet the conditions of their time.

It is a fine thing to revere the memory of our forefathers but we must remember that they were leaders in a moving procession of progress in their time and that the procession did not halt permanently at their graves.

The Chinese have tried ancestor worship for centuries and have refused to change from the methods and habits of their fathers. They are several centuries behind the times. It is well to make use of the experience of the past but it needs to be kept up to date.

No one of us can read the advertisements in this paper without realizing the tremendous improvements that are being made in everything that has to do with farm life. And no one can afford to compete with modern methods without having the information which the experts back of these advertisements are able to give and are willing and glad to give.

THE COST

The whole vast cost of an American offensive in Europe is but remotely suggested by Lord Northcliffe's estimate of \$50 a week for maintenance alone of every soldier we send to France. This would mean ten million dollars a week, or \$520,000,000 a year, for the maintenance of a force of 200,000, the estimated size of the proposed "Roosevelt army," or \$2,600,000,000 a year for an army of a million men. The pay of the officers and men in such an army of a million would probably swell this great sum to more than three billions, and, as two million men would be needed in order to meet the Germans on anything like equal terms, we can readily figure a yearly

cost of more than six billions without taking account of the expense of shipbuilding, the losses through submarine attack during transport, and the replacing of these losses and those on the battle front.

No wonder Lord Northcliffe, one of the best informed men in England, has advised against the rushing to the colors of all sorts of persons and the inclusion of men in any way unfit in the army we send to Europe. Even a little army of 200,000 men will cost us \$520,000,000 a year for maintenance alone, and would require 200 ships carrying a thousand men each to ferry the force across the Atlantic. Such figures strengthen the argument already appealing to common sense in favor of sending only picked, trained, seasoned young men. It is a job only for regulars, if we had enough of and could spare them. It is not a job for a "silk-stocking" army of men chosen for their wealth or social prominence.

THE OLDEST FLAG

We are one of the youngest nations, but never-the-less it has been shown that, among all the belligerents of the present war, we have the oldest flag. The Turkish star and crescent is older than the Stars and Stripes, but only as a religious emblem—not as a national banner. The American flag dates back to 1777. The Russian red, white and blue also goes back to the eighteenth century, but only as used separately and not combined as now. The tricolor of France was adopted in 1791. The British Union Jack did not exist in its present form before 1801, the year of the creation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The German red, white and black dates back from 1867, as does the flag of Austria-Hungary, the dual monarchy being formed in that year. The Italian flag now in use was adopted in 1805. Japan's present flag was adopted in 1859. The flag of the Chinese is as new as their republic. Thus it appears that the last flag to enter the great war is the oldest of them all.

If American destroyers are already chasing German submarines in the war zone, our patriots who spend their time in denouncing the government at Washington may take comfort in the knowledge that something has been accomplished, after all.

Some American College professors are less cocksure than those of Germany appear to be. Referring to the great problems that must be solved promptly and wisely at Washington, a Pennsylvania University professor casually remarked the other day: "I'm glad that two persons are not responsible for those decisions—myself and Teddy."

The American loan of \$100,000,000 to disturbed Russia seems to involve risk, even though the money is to pay for purchases in this country, but it should perform good service as proof that we are not taking the side of any Russian faction and merely wish to back the nation itself against the common enemy.

A modest, anonymous American donor—a rare example in these times has caused to be handed to Mr. Balfour, head of the British commission, \$2000,000 for the benefit of war widows and orphans—"in appreciation of the enormous sacrifices" made by the people of Great Britain "to insure the future liberty and happiness of the entire world."

EDGAR HOWARD SAYS HE WAS FOOLED

Lieutenant Governor Edgar Howard, editor of the Columbus Telegram, is printing an interesting review of the doings of the past session of the Nebraska legislature. In his issue of last week he had the following to say regarding the appointment of a telephone investigating committee:

I have heard some men say that they could not be fooled by anybody. I confess that I am not so smart. I can be fooled. I was nicely fooled by the artistic telephone trust lobby last winter. Some nasty charges were afloat regarding the distribution of favors to legislators by the telephone trust. The charges were so broad that it seemed certain some sort of an investigation must be made by the legislature. And here's where the smooth lobby got active. If the move for an investigation committee could only be in friendly telephone hands, then the telephone trust might get out of danger. At the psychological moment Senator Wilson, of Dodge county, claiming to be justly indignant because of telephone lobby activity, introduced by resolution. He was encouraged by Senator Adams, of Dawes county—a senator who posed as the most implacable foe of the telephone trust. Quite naturally I appointed Wilson and Adams on the investigating committee. That's where I played the part of a wide-mouth sucker. I have often thought I might have done better if I had appointed Manager Sanders, of Norfolk, who was one of the most scientific of telephone lobbyists, together with Casper E. Yost, president of the Nebraska Telephone company. That investigating committee was given power to administer oaths and examine witnesses, but never a witness was examined. I did appoint one sure anti-monopolist on the committee—Senator Chappell, of Kearney county—but he didn't have any more show against his two colleagues than a republican in Texas. I do not believe the gang fooled me very often during the winter, but I take my hat off to Wally Wilson and George Adams, hailing them as a pair of the most cunning lads that ever played the part of angels to the telephone lobby.

THE REAL ISSUE

The position of Representative Sisson of Mississippi on the question of the freedom of the press calls to mind that of Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Sisson says he has not been fairly treated by newspapers but that he is "unalterably opposed" to the censorship of the press. "I would rather," he declares, "that every newspaper in the country had the absolute right to publish even falsehood than to stop their right to publish the truth and the whole truth." Stating the same general principle, Thomas Jefferson said that the freedom of the press could not be limited "without danger of losing it" and that even harmful abuse of such freedom was "better than European bondage."

After denouncing British censorship, which, especially during the earlier stage of the war, has undoubtedly been misguided into useless and harmful extremes, the Mississippi Congressman said: "I do not believe the American people, who have been taught from the foundation of the government to the present time that free speech and a free press shall always be inviolate, would be willing because of a foreign war that the public press should not publish the truth about all officials. If any official does wrong he ought to be criticised, and if the criticism is harsh it will do no harm."

This is perfectly sound as far as it goes, but it is apart from the real question at issue. Nobody questions the right of the press to free utterance and there has been no attempt to suppress criticism. The government, for good reasons, has merely withheld some bits of information or given them out only after delay. This has caused disturbance because the people want the news and the newspapers want to supply it. As a result of the outcry the Administration has abandoned for the present the effort to secure a censorship law and will rely on the voluntary agreement of the newspapers not to publish military information of use to the enemy. Yet any reflecting person must realize that this is an unsafe reliance. Good intentions may be readily granted, but good judgment on the part of several thousand newspaper managers is another matter. It is obvious that whatever is known to the American public generally will be known to the enemy and that the withholding of information may at times be imperative.

Secrecy or censorship in war time is in itself no less a correct principle than the freedom of the press. As for the criticism of public officials, there is not only no attempt but no possibility of stopping it. We hear it and read it constantly. The experts of the General Staff and War College know how to solve the appallingly serious military problems now confronting the nation, if anybody does, yet their recommendations are flouted and denounced by hundreds of writers and public speakers every day, mere amateurs and inexperienced observers taking it upon themselves to direct or regulate the professionals. All this is both unfortunate and harmful but, under our institutions, inevitable.

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